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ABSTRACT

Noting that as many as 15 million elementary school children are regularly left without adult supervision for several hours after school each day until an adult returns home from work, this book focuses on what is happening and what could happen to latchkey children in terms of the community as a whole, as well as in regard to public libraries. The first of three parts, "Children in Self- Care after School," presents statistics and contributing factors and considers the implications and impact of leaving children in self-care. The second part, "Latchkey Children in the Community," discusses local and national responses including programs offered by agencies other than the library for these children and self-care supportive programs. The third part, "Latchkey Children in Public Libraries," discusses why these children present a dilemma for public libraries and presents what national research tells us about library latchkey children, library responses to the problem, and recommendations for future library services. Each of the eight individual chapters includes references. Appended materials provide copies of questionnaires used in 1988 and 1990 national surveys; an annotated bibliography of print and nonprint fiction and factual materials for youth about latchkey children; a list of latchkey organizations and agencies; and the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of public libraries in case studies. (BBM)

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